




**FACING
DIFFICULT
TRUTHS**

Climate Psychology Alliance



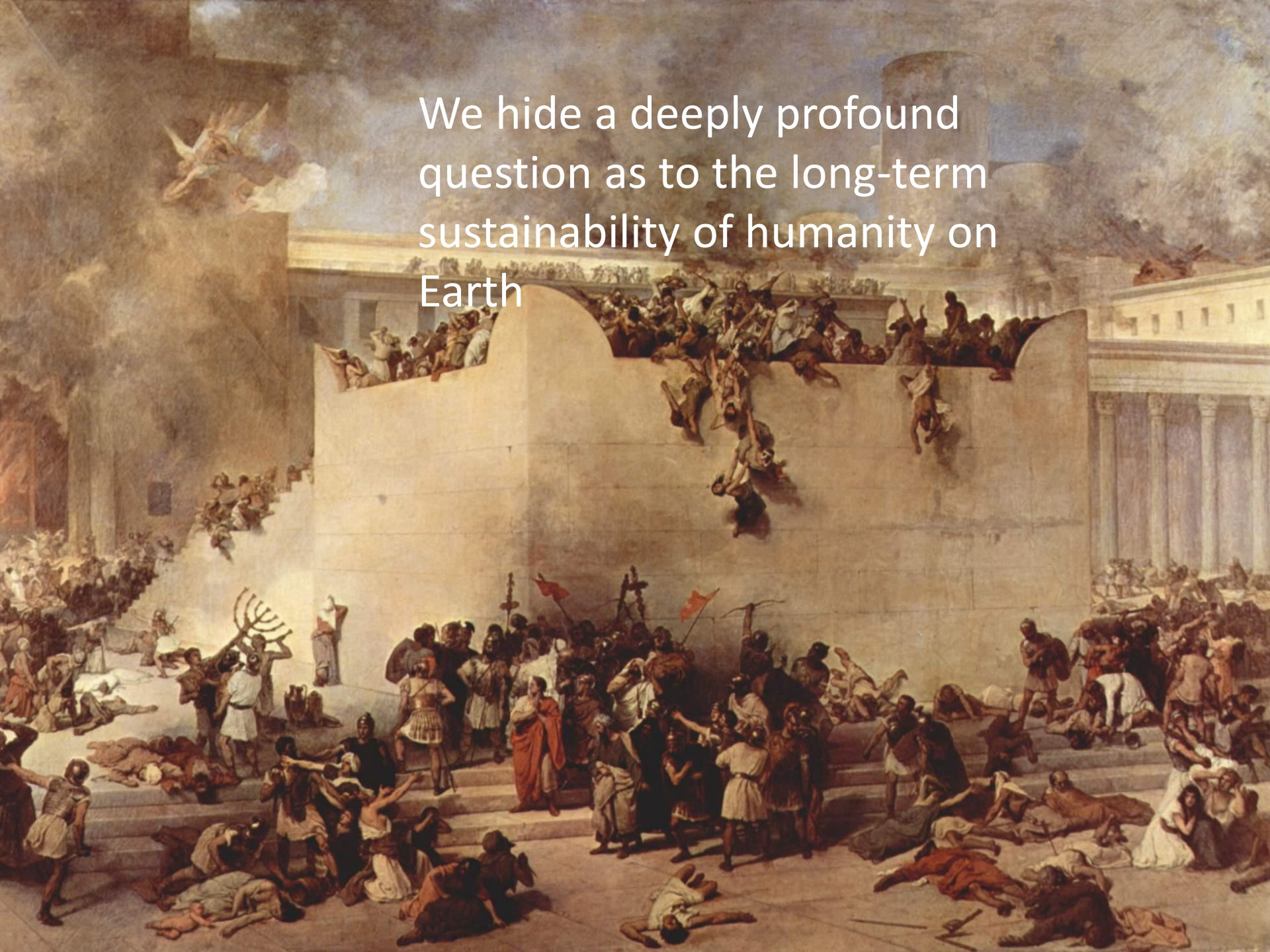
Hello

- Housekeeping
- Dr Julian Manley
- He's the psychosocial expert, not me
- This is about a joining up of disciplines
- This is WIP
- I will make mistakes
- It is up for discussion
- So....what's it all about?

A Romantic-style landscape painting. In the foreground, a river flows through a lush, green valley, surrounded by rocks and dense vegetation. A dirt path winds through the middle ground. In the distance, a small white house with a chimney is nestled among trees on a hillside. The background features a large, rugged mountain range under a dramatic sky filled with thick, white clouds. The overall mood is one of natural grandeur and beauty.

Climate change isn't an
environmental issue: it is a
cultural, social, ethical and
psychoanalytical one

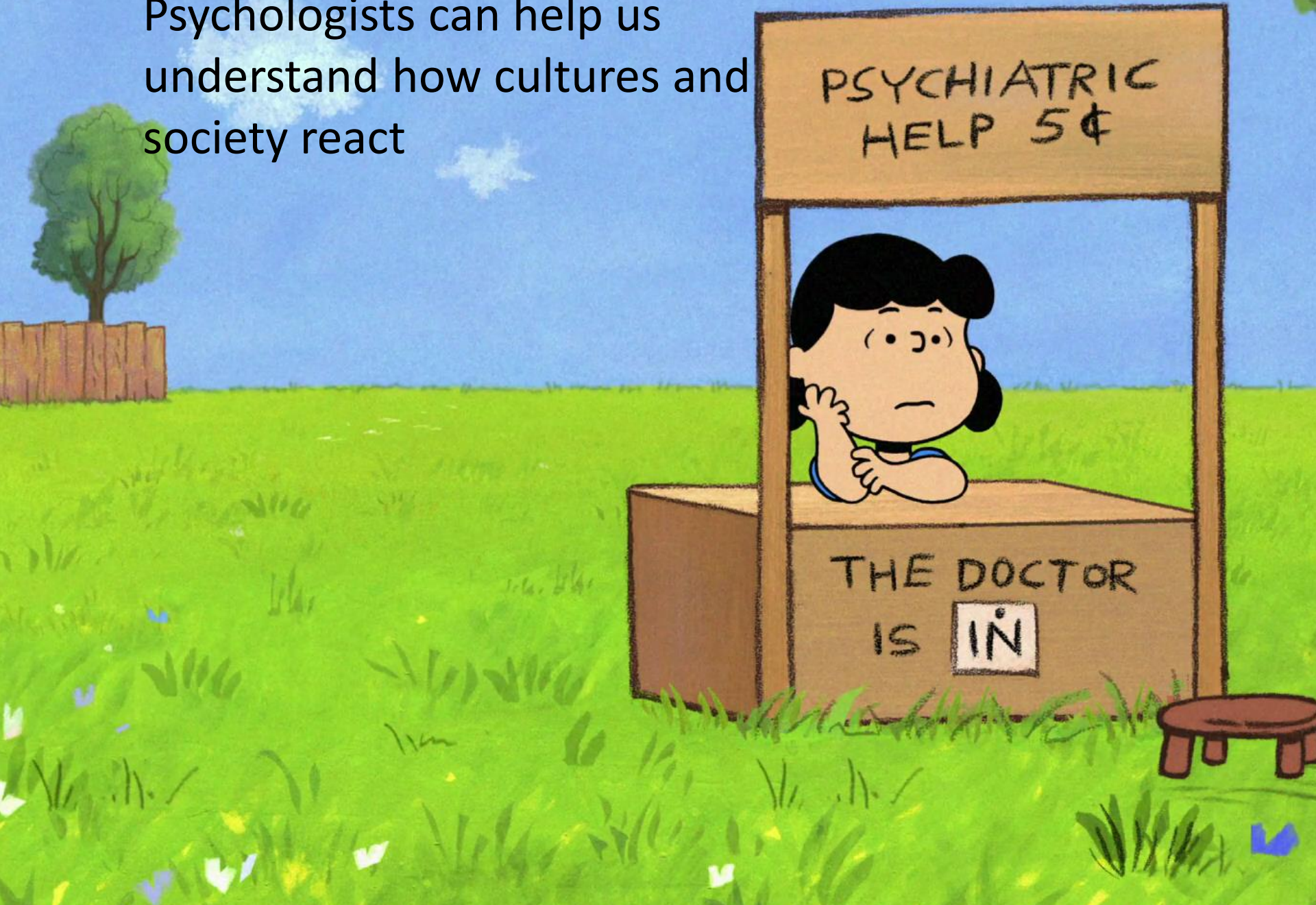
We hide a deeply profound
question as to the long-term
sustainability of humanity on
Earth



The overwhelming individual response to climate change is a psychological response: anxiety. And denial - a psychological process



Psychologists can help us
understand how cultures and
society react



Psychologists' skills lie in uncovering individual, interpersonal and social forces & solutions capable of changing human behaviour



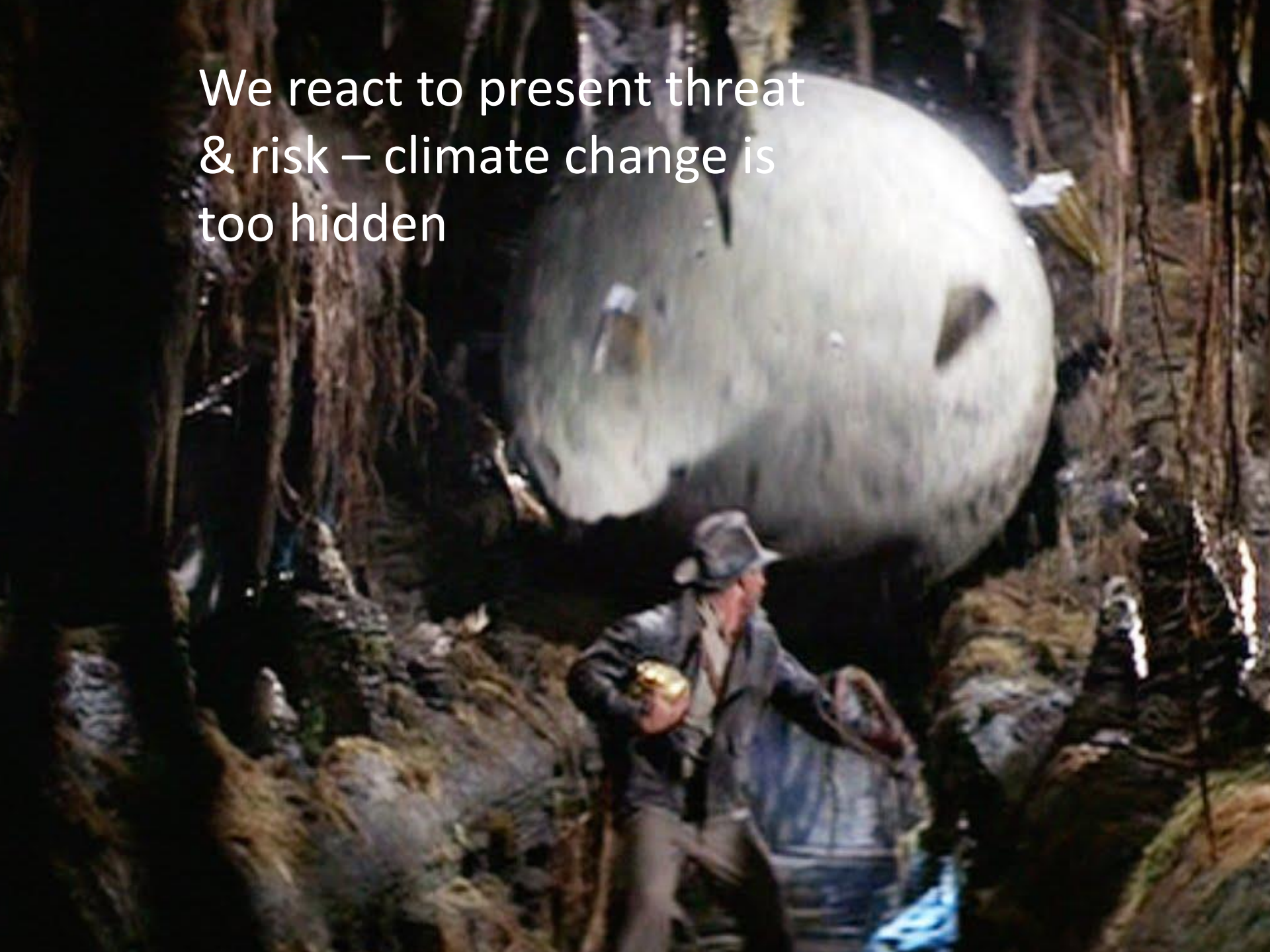



Neurologically our brains are
wired to respond slowly to
distant threat



Psychologically we are fighting
fear of annihilation, a
generational threat

We react to present threat
& risk – climate change is
too hidden





You're all
Guilty

There's
nothing I can
do that will
stop it

A cartoon illustration of Donald Trump with a shocked expression, wide eyes, and a hand to his chin. He has his signature blonde hair and is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. The background is a solid blue color.

We're
screwed



Responses

- Numbness & apathy
- Anger? In mourning?
- Hedonism
- Negation, denial and disavowal
- Green consumerism not real change
- A strongly worded Facebook post
- But sometimes...A wider connection to the issues seen as a whole

Climate Change needs to be faster

- Climate Change is a vague, abstract threat
- Neurologically our brains are wired to respond slowly to distant threat
- Unless personally vulnerable, inducing fear doesn't work
- In contrast neo-liberalism offers us quick fixes, hope and stuff to protect us
- The threat & the benefits of cutting back so present actions aren't curtailed

It's NOT
Exxon's Fault
— It's Yours

We transfer the problem

- We hope for a future technological fix
- We blame others such as Exxon whilst using their products
- We hide within hedonism: watch sport, porn, hide our heads in social media

.....so where is the solution to be found?

Universities and Colleges

END OF PART ONE

Over to the expert....

PART TWO

Approaches within HEIs and FEIs

- Traditional approaches aren't fast enough
- Only some people are susceptible to behaviour change
- That change won't happen fast enough
- This is a supply-side not a demand-side issue
- We need to tackle future leaders



KEEP
CALM

cause

I'm

Controversial

Sorry, recycling & energy saving campaigns don't work

- They offer a get-out clause for some: they have done their bit & carry on regardless
- They suggest small actions will save us: they can't, we know this and this induces anxiety
- Anxiety means we react negatively to future requests for action
- We then hide in hedonism, transfer or ignore

A Way Forward

- We need to frame the issue and provide a way forward: a vision to match that of neo-liberal capitalism
- We need to link feminism, animal & human rights, race and gender rights, civil rights
- We need to reduce anxiety to useful levels
- Acknowledge people's fears and reasons, not dismiss them
- Reach consensus

In HE and FE

We have access to the next leaders, designers and builders of our society

- Provide a safe place for students to experiment
- Implant into established curriculum, don't modularise
- Make all funding dependent on actively addressing the issues
- Use creative ways
- Get management buy-in
- Take private sector to task
- Influence future leaders



This is for all disciplines

Examples of inter-disciplinary connections:

- A perverse culture: **historians** can help us find our place
- **Marketing** needs to change and embrace new messages
- **Politics** needs to discover the benefits to them of a green transition
- **Creative people** can re-visualise and make messages and actions clearer so they are worthwhile
- **Interior Designers & Architects** can send messages to clients through their work
- **Sociologists** and **psychologists** can help us make sense of it
- **Engineers** and **Designers** make in ways that complement life
- **Graphic Designers & digital platform designers** can visualise it

Don't Modularise Sustainability

- In fact, don't even use the 'S' word
- It's already in many subjects
- Working with students will bring it out more
- Avoid challenging academic freedoms
- Speak the language of practice
- Find the positive
- Challenge guilt: get more specialists practicing in their area
- Create new career opportunities
- Use psychosocial approaches in interactions



Art is Powerful, it connects us emotionally to ourselves, each other and to nature.

Art & Science together are unstoppable, and must be used together again.

Using psychosocial approaches we can mobilise future leaders and practitioners to change how we treat our Living Planet.

More info

- <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/nov/10/brain-climate-change-science-psychology-environment-elections>
- <http://www.apa.org/science/about/publications/climate-change-booklet.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CISrmfbgmQ>
- <http://www.sallyweintrobe.com/engaging-with-climate-change/>
- <http://hedgerleywood.org/empathymedia/the-psychology-of-climate-action/>
- <https://www.pachamama.org/blog/healing-ourselves-and-the-earth-with-ecopsychology>